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POLAND: Political Activities

There is continuing evidence of passive resistance in the eastern city of Lublin. Party leaders, meanwhile, are attempting to bring order to local party organizations.

production problems and price increases are causing uneasiness among the workers, who have made negative comments about the treatment of those interned in prison camps and about the police and military. The general public also is reported to have lost confidence in the military.

Comment: The problems in Lublin probably are common throughout the country. Although such grumbling is not likely to lead quickly to large-scale violence, the party probably will not be able to persuade workers to be more enthusiastic about its program of economic and political recovery.

Lack of Party Discipline

The party leadership is trying to restore order within the lower ranks. The Politburo decided on 12 January to send Politburo and Central Committee members to visit local party organizations, with priority given to selected factory committees.

Many local party officials who have been on the defensive for 16 months are taking the opportunity to settle scores with those who humiliated them. Party secretary Orzechowski, who reputedly has close ties with Premier Jaruzelski, last week publicly condemned this practice.

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Comment: One of the main goals of visiting party leaders may be to bring some order to the seemingly spontaneous purge of party ranks in many localities. The leadership apparently is concerned that the party is losing some good people. [REDACTED]

A Concerned Conservative

Kazimierz Kakol, a conservative party official with extensive contacts in the leadership, has told [REDACTED] that one of the main advantages of martial law is that it allows the party to rebuild its strength and eliminate opportunists. Although Kakol realizes that martial law cannot accomplish anything positive, he worries that the party has yet to unite behind a coherent program. [REDACTED]

Kakol also stressed the danger that the party will forget that the turbulence of the past 16 months was caused by its lack of responsiveness to popular needs. He favors a program of action, apparently devised by Deputy Premier Rakowski, that calls for retaining democratic pluralism, a worker-centered labor movement, and economic reforms. [REDACTED]

Comment: Kakol's concern about the party's future prospects and about the importance of the lessons of the last 16 months indicates that there is some sentiment among the party leaders for continuing the "modest" reforms begun after August 1980. His assertion that Rakowski has presented a "course of action" suggests that Rakowski is playing a larger role than his government position would normally allow. Although Rakowski has shown that his "moderate" credentials have definite limits, he generally has been considered not to be well liked by the Soviets. [REDACTED]

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Weather's Impact

Poland's unusually harsh winter has placed additional strains on the economy. Bad weather has on several occasions stalled rail and highway traffic, hampered trans-loading operations in the Baltic ports, and impeded movement of coal supplies. [REDACTED]

North of Warsaw, flooding of river lowlands has destroyed thousands of hectares of winter grains and has isolated rural residents. Forecasts indicate continued below-normal temperatures and greater-than-normal snowfall well into February. [REDACTED]

Comment: The severe weather probably has helped dampen active resistance to the imposition of martial law. It also potentially provides an alibi for poor economic performance. The continuation of bad weather could affect leadership discussions of reform options by hindering accurate assessments of passive resistance and its costs to the economy. [REDACTED]



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